



BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2025

ISSUE 79



A LOOK AT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE COMMUNITY

Blackridge Community Council wish you a joyous holiday season with peace & cheer in the New Year!

www.blackridge.cc



BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Welcome

As the dark nights and cold weather settle over our wee village, the warmth of our community spirit shines brighter than ever. In this special Winter 2025 newsletter edition, we are delighted to bring you a comprehensive look at the latest updates and heartwarming stories from our community.

This issue is packed with news on upcoming events, exciting local initiatives, and highlights of achievements by our dedicated residents. We believe these stories celebrate the incredible resilience, warmth, and shared spirit that makes our village a true home.

We hope it offers inspiration and keeps you engaged with all the wonderful things happening right on your doorstep.

Stay warm, stay safe, and enjoy the festivities!

Warm regards,
The Blackridge Community Council

Cover photo credit: Camera Club

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm
in the Craig Inn Centre

CRAIG INN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Meet on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7.00pm
in the Craig Inn Centre

There are no meetings on July and August for both of these Committees

If you would like to feature an article in our Newsletter, please email **mail@blackridge.cc** and put the word “Newsletter” in the subject line.

www.blackridge.cc

BLACKRIDGE PARISH CHURCH



Dear Community,

We are delighted to share some wonderful news with you in 2026 our village church will be celebrating its 125th anniversary!

The decision to build a church in Blackridge was taken in Armadale Church Manse in February 1899. To build the church, the cost was £1,150; the congregation chipped in £100, and Lady Baillie picked up the remainder of £1,050. The church was dedicated on 27th October 1901.

This is a very special milestone for our community, and we would love for everyone to be part of it. To mark the occasion, we will be holding a series of events each month from January through to October 2026, celebrating not only our church's history but also the life and spirit of our village.

More details of the individual events will be shared in the coming months, but in the meantime, we warmly invite anyone who would like to get involved, whether by helping organise, lending a hand at an event, sharing memories, or simply supporting us in any way you can.

This is a celebration for the whole community, and we look forward to making it a truly memorable year together.

If you would like to help or have ideas to share, please do get in touch with us. Email: blackridgeparishchurch@outlook.com

With thanks and best wishes,

BLACKRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

Services Conducted by

Reverend Julia Wiley MA (CE) MDiv
Parish Assistant Yvonne Young

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP – 9.45am
COMMUNION SERVICES 1ST SUNDAYS IN
MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER & DECEMBER
EASTER SUNDAY 5TH APRIL 2026

Watchnight Service 11.30pm

Church opens at 10.45pm for tea

A warm welcome is extended to all.

10TH ANNIVERSARY BONFIRE NIGHT

Audrey Boyd would like to extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make the 10th Anniversary of our village Bonfire Night such a special occasion.

A big thank you to:

- **L & H Leisure and Shuggie Naismith for providing fantastic entertainment and disco.**
- **Fire Marshal Stuart Queen, for overseeing a spectacular firework display.**
- **Katz Kandy for the amazing raffle hampers.**

Congratulations to our raffle winners: Liz Russell and Lorraine Henney

We are also deeply grateful to the **First Responders** for giving up their time to keep everyone safe, and to **Foundation Scotland**, whose generous grants make events like this possible.

Most importantly, thank you to everyone who came along to support the event. Your presence makes all the hard work worthwhile. It was wonderful to see our community – and friends from beyond – come together for such a fantastic turnout.

Total raised from the raffle and donation tins: £443.70

Your support truly makes a difference!

We hope you all enjoyed the evening.

REMEMBERING TOGETHER – BLACKRIDGE WAR MEMORIAL

Did you know our War Memorial is inside the Church?

Within Blackridge Parish Church, in the quiet beauty of the chancel, you'll find our village's War Memorial. The names of those who gave their lives are also lovingly honoured and, their memory illuminated by the stained-glass windows within the church itself.

This year's remembrance service brought together the creativity of our primary school children and villagers to create a beautiful display. Each poppy and animal has been lovingly made to honour the courage, sacrifice, and spirit of those who served and to remind us that remembrance belongs to every generation.

You will be made most welcome to visit and reflect whenever the church is open. Whether you pause for a moment or linger in thought, this is a place for our whole community to remember with gratitude.

Let us keep their light shining.





Every Wednesday and Friday our **Tutti Tots** Pre-School music lessons meet at 10.20am at the Craig Inn. Our numbers remain healthy with the addition of some new brothers and sisters along the way! Parents and grandparents attending the class stay afterwards to enjoy a tea, coffee and a chat whilst the children take part in supervised free play. We remain encouraged to see the way in which they continue to build friendships with other children in the class, as well as develop their musical awareness and abilities. We have now experienced the progression of children moving from our nursery class going on to join our primary school age class.

Every two weeks, **Toots & Taps**, our primary school age music class, meets in the Craig Inn library. The nine children that attend the class enjoy learning to play tin whistle, drums and piano. The Toots & Taps class gave a fabulous performance at this year's Management Committee AGM in May where they performed a Sea Shanty and an intricate rhythm exercise to the delight of their audience. The class played two pieces of music with the Bathgate Concert Orchestra in October, including "March from Carmen" and "La Rejouissance" from the Royal Fireworks, during their rehearsal at the Craig Inn. Together, the two groups put on a fantastic show for friends and family who had come to support this endeavour.

Every year, the Tutti Music project organises popular fundraising events like a Turtle Derby and Family Ceilidh. We are appreciative of all the help we get from friends, family and the Craig Inn Management Committee.

For information on any of our classes please contact
Armadale Partnership Centre on 01506 282 278
www.tuttimusic.uk



Blackridge

PHARMACY

01501 751 175

22 MAIN STREET,
BLACKRIDGE, EH48 3SA

PHARMACY FESTIVE OPENING HOURS

Thursday 25th December

CLOSED

Friday 26th December

CLOSED

Saturday 27th December

9.00am - 1.00pm

New Year's Day

10.00am - 3.00pm

Friday 2nd January 2026

CLOSED

Saturday 3rd January 2026

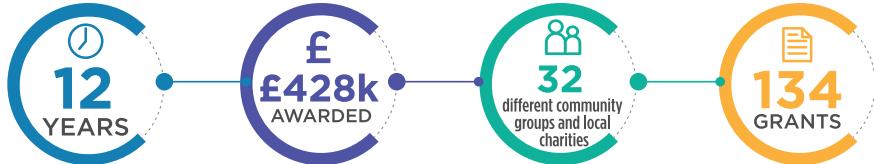
9.00am - 1.00pm

.....**BLACKRIDGEPHARMACY.CO.UK** **info@blackridgepharmacy.co.uk**



Foundation Scotland

BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY FUND



Whilst the numbers tell part of the story, the impact of the Fund is much more colourful! Whether it's the Firework Display, Model Railways, Indoor Bowling, Paper crafting, Time Out Art, Monday Club tours, Tutti Music or 'Then and Now' Photographic displays, the Fund has played its part this year. With one Round still to go at the time of writing (decisions in November), **2025 has seen eight grants worth nearly £45,000 awarded.**

For more information about the Fund, what it has supported and how to apply, scan QR code



BURNHEAD MOSS EDUCATION & TRAINING (BMET) FUND

Since launch in 2016, **115** Blackridge residents have received bursaries to take up education and training courses. This year has seen residents take up:

- Modern apprenticeships
- College courses in Television production, Science and Cyber security
- University degrees in a range of subjects
- Short courses in subjects as diverse as vehicle repairs, teaching yoga and podcast production.

Thinking of applying? scan QR code

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/apply-for-funding/funding-available/blackridge>



The BMET Fund has been showcased as a best practice example, inspiring other communities to set up similar schemes. It will be published soon, keep an eye on <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-news> to see it!

Foundation Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland no SC022910





**Foundation
Scotland**

BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY FUND PANEL

Did you know that **11 volunteers** have given their time, passion for the community and local knowledge to guide the Fund's use. We're delighted to welcome Iain McLean to the Panel this month, and Angela Crolla will be joining next Spring as some members step down at the end of their term.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed.

We will be seeking one further new member in the Spring too –
email malcolm@foundationscotland.org.uk if you'd like to make a difference.

PANEL DATES FOR 2026 ARE LISTED BELOW

Round	Application deadline	Decision
Spring	Sun 26/02/2026	End April
Summer	Sun 28/06/2026	Late August
Autumn	Sun 27/09/2026	Late Nov

PEATLAND RESTORATION AT BLAWHORN MOSS

Blawhorn Moss NNR is the midst of a substantial project of peatland restoration which started in September and finishes in December. The project is being run by Peatland Action through the Peatland Action programme.

It is recognised that restoring peatlands is one of the most effective ways of locking in carbon and therefore helping with the climate crisis. The work on Blawhorn will repair degraded parts of the bog and re-vegetate peat hags, dam drainage ditches and use specific techniques to increase the water level on the moss to promote the growth of sphagnum moss which will eventually form peat.

The work is being funded by the Scottish Government with the work being carried out by OpenSpace who are a specialist Ecological Consultancy and Conservation Contractor.

Unfortunately during the work on one part of the moss it will be necessary to close one of the paths for safety reasons. The path concerned is the one marked red on the map displayed in the car park and notices will be displayed when this closure is in force.



For more information on peatland restoration
scan the QR code





RONNIES ROLLS

Blackridge Main Street next to Coopers Bar
Open: Monday - Friday • 8.00am - 2.00pm
Saturday & Sunday • 9.00am - 1.30pm

We would like to thank the community for all their support since we opened and let you all know we are here for the long term. Head over to our Facebook page to check out the latest news and deals. Just search Ronnie's Rolls.



We are available for deliveries Sat/Sun via Scoffable



SENIOR LADIES BOWLING GROUP

Senior Ladies Bowling Group had a lovely outing to the Festival Theatre Edinburgh to see "WAR HORSE". The day was made complete with a light meal and a small refreshment, all thanks to Foundation Scotland, without their support these outings would not be possible. Next up will be our Christmas treat once again made possible by funding from Foundation Scotland.

CRAIG INN CENTRE - THURSDAY - 1.30PM - 3.30PM



Barbauchlaw Medical Practices ARMADALE & BLACKRIDGE



The GP practice is closed on the following public holidays so please ensure that you have enough medication to last you during these closures.

Thursday 25th and Friday 26th December 2025

Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd January 2026



Please call 111 if you require medical attention during the above days.



We would like to wish our patients a very happy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

www.barbauchlawmp.com/index.pl



IT'S BEEN A RUBBISH SUMMER !!!

Unfortunately, the title has nothing to do with the weather we have had over the summer and more to do with litter and fly-tipping around the village.

Our village, like many others, suffers from littering and fly-tipping with hot spots such as Blawhorn Moss entry road and the railway bridge on Quarry Road being particular favourites for accessing by a vehicle.

People work hard to keep the village clean and tidy with special thanks to the Scout groups and West Lothian Litter Pickers who travel around in their own time clearing up peoples' discarded litter.

So what can you do?

- take rubbish home with you • teach children about littering
- make sure your bins don't blow over during storms
- put cigarette ends safely in bins
- take rubbish to re-cycling centres
- safely report fly-tippers



If you witness people fly-tipping, do not approach them simply take a note of the vehicle and **report to West Lothian council on 01506 280000** or **scan qr code** and fill in form.



Time Out Art Group recently held an Open Day to showcase their work and celebrate their 26th year.

Thanks to everyone who came along with special thanks to Blackridge Community Fund, administered by Foundation Scotland, who provide our funding.

New members welcome (over 16). Every Tuesday 6.00pm - 9.00pm
Craig Inn Centre



THANK YOU

- Once again the coffee morning was a great success and this year we banked a total of **£3,511** for MacMillan.
- A big thank you to all who participated in any way to help us achieve this amount.
- This was our 28th year and brings our total to over £53,000.**



Registered charity Scotland (SC039907)

BLACKRIDGE, WESTRIGG & WESTCRAIGS OLD FOLKS COMMITTEE

VILLAGE CHRISTMAS TREAT Monday 22nd December 2025

We are happy to inform you that we have secured Shotts Bon Accord Football Club for this years Christmas treat.

There will be no other changes to the way we hold this event with transport still provided to take you there & back. Andrew Sherlock will still be serving our Christmas dinner with Squeeze & Tease providing the evening entertainment. (An email and letter has been sent recorded delivery to the main man advising change of the venue, to ensure he shows up!)

The committee's only request for individuals who want to attend the event is to bring a small raffle prize worth approximately £5. This might be a raffle for a man, woman, or something that would do either. One of Santa's numerous assistants will then distribute them throughout the evening, getting everyone truly into the Christmas spirit.

2026 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY Summer Day Trip - Saturday 13th June

includes travel to and from village to location (to be advised),
lunch, afternoon free to explore and evening meal

Christmas Treat - Monday 21st December

includes travel to and from location, evening meal and entertainment

To enjoy our days/nights and meet new friends, join our Old Folks Club*

**available to Blackridge residents only, must be 60 or over, unfortunately this does not include carers or friends and family outwith the village.*

BLACKRIDGE, WESTRIGG & WESTCRAIGS OLD FOLKS COMMITTEE

would like to wish each and everyone of you

**Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas
and a Happy & Healthy 2026**



See you all for the Christmas Treat on 22nd December



Anyone over 60 years of age wishing to join our group will receive a warm welcome, a guaranteed laugh and great company. The Club meets every Monday between 1.00pm – 3.00pm in the Craig Inn Centre and only costs you £1 per week after you take out a membership with the Community Centre.

We have seen our numbers increase over the last few months and, thanks to Foundation Scotland, members enjoyed a two-course lunch at the Green Tree Hotel in Peebles and a trip to Klondyke Garden Centre in Polmont for Afternoon Tea. We also enjoyed a Halloween themed buffet catered by Taste Buds in Armadale and are now looking forward to the Christmas Lunch.

A special thanks to our guest speakers and musicians for entertaining us again this year. In particular to Susan Hentges from the Food Train, who talked about the services they provide. Thanks also to Angela Wagstaff who gave us a First Aid demonstration on resuscitation and chocking for all age groups and how to use a defibrillator. We are all hoping we never need to use our new skills!

Apart from eating, we continue to play our board games and have our tea and, of course, biscuits!

ARMADALE & BLACKRIDGE CAMERA CLUB

Our small group of photography enthusiasts are creating calendars for the Blackridge community's clubs and groups with the help of funding from Foundation Scotland. All proceeds from sales are put back into the community.

Additionally, Radio Lollipop at Edinburgh's Sick Children's Hospital asked us to create one for their radio station.

You can browse and purchase our collection from the Craig Inn Centre; simply enter your information in the book, and we'll take care of the rest!

We can also make a customised calendar featuring your favourite photo to give as a present.

Orders can be placed by completing the book, calling/texting 07780 682 970 or following Blackridge Camera Club on Facebook.





Beechbrae

Beechbrae News - Ally Graham

The autumn leaf colours were really stunning this year at Beechbrae. Vivid yellows and oranges which have now mostly fallen to the ground with the snow and ice in November. Winter is here and with it brings a stillness and different kind of beauty.



Summer Activities

We had really great summer activities this year at Beechbrae, exploring moths on site & at Blawhorn Moss as well as the usual bushcraft fun. We also had fun with the P5 class from Blackridge Primary School up at Blawhorn Moss in May, exploring the depth of peat and various habitats that our local bog holds.

Winter Activities

We've started to clear out some of the smaller ponds of vegetation in the wetland to prepare for various amphibians in the spring. This is something we'll continue to chip away at this winter when the weather allows. We're still carrying on with our various outdoor programmes throughout the week, wrapping up warm and keeping moving.

Beechbrae SCIO is a Scottish Charity (SC046994) Registered at:
Beechbrae Wood, Heights Rd Blackridge West Lothian EH48 3SW



For regular updates and information, follow our social pages or website

@beechbrae

www.beechbrae.com

beechbrae

Christmas Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of plain flour
- 3/4 cup chopped cherries
- 1 cup softened butter
- 1/2 cup icing sugar
- 2/3 cup chocolate chips
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Cream butter, sugar and vanilla then add flour, cherries and chocolate chips. Form dough into long sausage, wrap in cling film and place in fridge for 1 hour. Slice and place on baking tray and cook for 13-15 minutes at 160 degrees. Cool for a few minutes in the trays before transferring to cooling rack.

BLACKRIDGE PRIMARY AND EARLY LEARNING CENTRE



It has been a busy few months for all at Blackridge Primary and ELC. Our senior pupils have visited Edinburgh as part of their learning on the history of our capital and Primary 1-3 have had an exciting morning wearing their PJs to school to celebrate Scottish Book Week and have their Book Bags gifted in a special bedtime read.

Our ELC team were delighted to be asked to present at the West Lothian Early Years' Conference, sharing their practice on Inclusive Learning Environments. This has sparked lots of interest from other settings who are keen to visit Blackridge ELC and see the fantastic environments for themselves. Some great news and testament to the hard work of the staff team.

Furthermore, we were very fortunate to receive funding from the James Wood Bequest. This funding has been put towards the creation of a Sensory Room within our school community. Recently, Cllr McGuire and Cllr Manion visited to officially open the space, with our P7 learners leading this celebration. It was a wonderful afternoon and we are delighted at the impact this space is having on so many of our learners already.



As Christmas approaches, we have lots planned across the school and ELC. We have a special Carol Concert for our families planned as well as parties and celebrations. In addition, our Parent Council will host their Christmas Fair in the school on Friday 12th December 12.00 - 2.00pm. It would be great to have as many attend this event as possible as it raises valuable funds for our whole school community that support towards things including the annual stationary packs provided for each learner and P1 welcome packs which include learners' first Blackridge PS jumper.

Everyone at Blackridge Primary & ELC would like to wish the Blackridge Community a safe and peaceful festive period and best wishes for 2026.

Claire McGoldrick
Head Teacher



BATHGATE CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1952, Bathgate Concert Orchestra is a happy mix of 30 amateur and professional musicians, playing a wide variety of orchestral music to suit all tastes — from symphonies to soundtracks, musicals to minimalism. New members are always welcome to join on Friday evenings from 7.30pm - 9.30pm in the Craig Inn Centre.

October was a busy and enjoyable month with several great events, making lots of music together, and finishing the month on a real high. Here's a quick look back at what's coming next as we head into the festive season.

We started October with our Tutti Music Night, a great evening of community music-making. (Read all about on page 5).

CANDLELIGHT CONCERT

Our Candlelight Concert was another highlight of the month. The warm glow of candlelight created a lovely atmosphere for an evening of beautiful music. We were delighted to feature three outstanding soloists: our Leader, Aileen Lowden, Vice President Alison Pinkerton, and Conductor Steven Meikle. Each delivered a captivating performance, demonstrating exceptional skill and musicality. It was a pleasure to see them perform and share their talent with the audience.

AUTUMN CONCERT

We rounded off October with our Autumn Concert, held at Brucefield Parish Church in Whitburn on Friday 24th October. The evening was full of great music and a wonderful, appreciative audience, making it a truly memorable event. The concert was a great success, showcasing the orchestra's work from August until October.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped, performed and came along and supported the events. They were special nights for both the audience and the orchestra. With one audience member commenting, ***"A fantastic evening of music, the orchestra just keeps getting better and better."***

UPCOMING FESTIVE CONCERTS

We are looking ahead to our Christmas concerts,
and we can't wait to share some festive music with you!

Friday 5th December | 7.30pm | Newton Community Centre
Saturday 13th December | 5.00pm | Craig Inn Community Centre

Email secretary@bathgateconcertorchestra.org.uk for further details



Building a Better Blackridge – Thank You & Next Steps

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in our recent Three Wishes Campaign and to those who joined us at the Community Workshop on 18th November. Your ideas and input are helping shape a shared vision for the future of Blackridge.

For those who couldn't attend, there's still time to have your say through the Place Standard Survey - your feedback is vital to building a full picture of how people experience life in our village.

At the workshop, some of the key themes raised by residents included:

- Protecting our woodland areas
- Tackling derelict land and buildings, especially around the old garage
- Improving traffic management on the A89
- Addressing the dangerous state of pavements
- Restoring a Sunday bus service
- Creating better active travel routes
- Concerns about housing near the rail station being on a flood plain
- Increasing local facilities for all ages

How to take part:

- Visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BlackridgePSA>
- Or scan the QR code below



Let's keep the momentum going - your voice matters, and together we can make Blackridge an even better place to live.



IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

POLICE/FIRE

Police HQ Livingston	01506 431200
Police (Non-Emergency)	101
Fire (Emergency)	999

HOSPITALS

St. John's Hospital, Livingston	01506 523000
University Hospital Monklands, Airdrie	01236 748748
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	0131 536 1000
Western General Hospital, Edinburgh	0131 537 1000
University Hospital Wishaw	01698 361100

HEALTH

Blackridge Health Centre	01501 751238
Harthill Health Centre	01501 751795
Armadale Health Centre	01501 730432
District Nurses / Midwife /Physio	01501 730339
Blackridge Pharmacy	01501 751175
NHS24 (Out of Hours Service)	111

SCHOOLS

Blackridge Primary	01501 751223
Armadale Academy	01506 282145
St. Anthony's Primary, Armadale	01501 731668
St. Kentigern's, Blackburn	01506 656404

UTILITIES EMERGENCIES

Scottish Gas	0800 111 999
SP Energy Networks (Electricity)	105
Scottish Water	0800 077 8778

TRAVEL

Rail Service Enquiries	0845 7484950
West Lothian Traveline	01506 775288

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

01506 280000

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Andrew McGuire andrew.mcguire@westlothian.gov.uk	01506 281717
Lynda Kenna lynda.kenna@westlothian.gov.uk	01506 281724
Susan Manion susan.manion@westlothian.gov.uk	01506 281702